



## TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM

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### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

January 23, 2017

Town Administrator's reports are available on-line at <http://www.ashburnham-ma.gov>

#### COMMITTEE/COMMISSION UPDATES

**Ashburnham Economic Development Committee.** The committee held their first meeting last week. Their next meeting is next week Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**Volunteer Openings.** Currently there are openings on the following: (2) Conservation Commission, (2) Parks & Recreation Committee. These are listed on the Town's website under Volunteer Opportunities.

#### MEETINGS

**Liquor License Establishments.** Selectmen Kyle Johnson and myself did our first visit to the liquor licensees in Town last week—we began with Turnpike Rod & Gun Club.

**MMA Annual Conference.** This past weekend I had the opportunity to attend the MMA's Annual Conference and trade show. On the first day of the conference, we heard from Lt. Governor Karyn Polito where the message was gratitude to the local communities and emphasis on Community Compact Cabinet participation and Regionalization grants that now replace the Community Innovative Challenge Grants (CIC). On the second day of the conference, we were graced with the presence of US Senator Elizabeth Warren, US Senator Edward Markey, and Governor Baker. Governor Baker stated that as promised, his proposed budget will increase Unrestricted Government Aid (UGOA) by the same increase that the State has in revenue, 3.9%. In addition, the Governor stated that in alignment with the recommendations of changes in the Chapter 70 formula, FY18's calculations will include health insurance costs for teachers. Unfortunately, we will not know if this in fact helps Ashburnham until the numbers are issued in late February early March.

**State Representative Zlotnik.** I met with Representative Zlotnik last week to introduce myself and to begin the dialogue on the needs of Ashburnham.

#### PERSONNEL

**Lieutenant.** We had 1 internal applicant for the open Lieutenant Position. Last week we promoted and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Christopher Conrad from Sergeant to Lieutenant. He will begin as Lieutenant on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Chief Barrett would like to present the new patrol officer and the promoted officers to the Select Board at the next regular meeting.

**Local Building Inspector.** Due to the unusually high volume of building permits being pulled this fiscal year and after consultation with our Building Commissioner Richard Reynolds, we have decided to advertise for a local building inspector for 10 hours a week from now until the end of the fiscal year. We have some funds available in our alternate building inspector line and may need to supplement it by approximately \$4000, which has been more than compensated for in the revenues from this department this fiscal year.

**Fire Chief Search Committee.** The committee held their first meeting and approved the job advertisement which has been posted on the Town's website, the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) website and the Massachusetts Fire Fighters Association. The committee determined that the closing date for applications will be the end of February. The committee will then meet to determine which candidates meet the minimum criteria and then extend written questions and applications to those candidates. Upon review of responses and application packets, the committee will invite candidates in for interviews. The goal is to have a candidate before our Interim Fire Chief and myself by April.

**Retirement.** Ashburnham's Collector of 15 years, Carla Clifford, has notified me in writing that she will be retiring effective February 22, 2017. Carla has been an asset to the Town over her tenure and she will be greatly missed.

**Treasurer/Collector Position.** The positions of Treasurer/Collector will be combined and the duties of both offices will be passed onto our Treasurer Tammy Collier, who has experience in both offices throughout the state. Tammy will increase her hours from 25 hrs/week to 40 hrs/week and transition to an exempt employee. For the last month before Carla retires, Tammy will begin taking on more hours to shadow and transfer as much information as possible from Carla.

## **PROJECTS**

**Budget FY18.** The FY18 budget is still underway. This week I will be meeting with the chair and vice chair of the advisory board to review expenses thus far as calculated and submitted. AWRSD will be submitting their proposed budget tomorrow evening at the school committee meeting, which I plan on attending. Shortly thereafter, we will be meeting with the business administrator Julie Surprenant, Westminster TA Karen Murphy, Westminster Advisory Board/CIC member and same for Ashburnham. One of the largest concerns for the FY18 budget is the unknown Health Insurance costs for FY18.

**Community Compact Cabinet.** I am aiming to finish the Community Compact Cabinet proposal and have it submitted to the State by the end of this week. I will have a full report on my proposed projects at the next meeting.

**DLTA Funding.** I am submitting the DLTA application for work on our Master Plan Land Use element. I will report back when we are notified if our project will be funded.

**Parking on Main Street.** Last week, Chief Barrett, DPW Superintendent Steve Nims, and I met with Ryan and Joe McGuane who own the building at 49-53 Main Street. We discussed the concern relative to parking on that side of Main Street as it approaches the intersection and the safety concern that other vehicles incur when trying to navigate the intersection while cars are parked. Ryan and Joe were very understanding and very helpful. In conclusion, our short term solution that was agreed to is that we will be removing the second space on that side of Main Street, posting No Parking signs and eventually blocking out both spaces with white lines. The remaining three spaces will be converted to 15-Minute Parking spaces which will allow for an increased flow of business for the establishments. We will also be painting parking space lines on the street when the weather warms up for easier sight lines for drivers.

**Sherbet Road.** Two weeks ago, DPW Superintendent Steve Nims, Winchendon Town Manager Keith Hickey, and Al Gallant, DPW Superintendent met to discuss the Ashburnham /Winchendon shared water line on Sherbet Road. Our proposed plan is to meet with Tighe & Bond to discuss options and proposed costs for design plans and an analysis to be conducted in FY18, to follow with a USDA application for replacement/repair of the water pipe and road for FY19.

### **On-Going Projects—*No update at this time***

- DPW Site
- Meissner Property
- Gardner Sewer Memorandum of Understanding
- Route 101-TIP